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ABSTRACT

In the United States there are 15 to 20 independent research libraries designed to provide the corpus of records necessary to intellectual inquiry in one or more disciplines, in dimensions as complete as possible, and with the optimum provision of scholarly apparatus and physical convenience. The rare nature of much of the collections of these libraries requires special handling and highly-trained staffs, and often means restricted public access. Because of these special circumstances, research libraries may not be able to permit the general public access mentioned in the National Program for Library and Information Services. They would be able to participate in making their material available to the scholarly public with support in the form of: assistance in preparing and issuing major catalogs and bibliographies; equipment for photoduplication and transport of needed records; and transport of qualified users to the libraries. Additional support is needed to maintain the collections and for training of staff. The recognition of the independent research libraries as a national information resource and their support would be a great service to the scholarly community. (Author/PF)

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NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR LIBRARY
AND INFORMATION SERVICES

RELATED PAPER
NUMBER FOUR

THE INDEPENDENT RESEARCH LIBRARY

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
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Describes the relationship and involvement of the independent research library with the national program as described in the second draft of the NCLIS program document. Projects the role and prospective benefits the independent research library would have in relating its program to such a national program, projects the types of standards the independent research library should be required to meet to join the national program, anticipates problems in developing this relationship, and suggest solutions.

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The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the NCLIS. Though related to the Commission's National Program, papers in this series are not an integral part of the National Program Document.

A principal objective of the National Program is the assured existence of the total informational and cultural record and its availability to and utilization by the nation's citizen. An important portion of this record, often overlooked or submerged in more general categories, is provided by the independent research libraries of the country. Small in number, many of these institutions are known throughout the world; they can and do make a unique contribution, which will be greatly enhanced through a National Program that takes appropriate cognizance of their distinctive characteristics, problems and potentials.

1. A Brief Profile of the Independent Research Library

a. Establishment and Governance

Of the 15 to 20 major institutions in this category⁽¹⁾, nearly half were formed through the beneficence of an individual who wished, through private philanthropy, to contribute to the enrichment of American culture. The other half of the group came into being through subscription or society memberships, also to provide intellectual substance to their communities. Their average age is well above a century, several having predated the birth of the nation and having numbered the founders among their patrons and users. Though organized in various ways, each operates under its own charter or articles of incorporation, has its own board of directors or trustees and issues its own annual report. In these respects lies a principal distinction: not being part of a larger institution (such as a university) nor a governmental and tax supported unit (such as a city public library), the independent research library can and has shaped its objective to meet the needs of given disciplines or areas of scholarly inquiry, rather than to satisfy the diffuse demands of an area's residents or a university curriculum.

- (1) The Independent Research Library Association has the following membership (October, 1974): American Antiquarian Society . American Philosophical Society . John Crerar Library . Folger Shakespeare Library . Linda Hall Library . Historical Society of Pennsylvania . Henry E. Huntington Library . Library Company of Philadelphia . Massachusetts Historical Society . Pierpont Morgan Library . Newberry Library . New York Historical Society . New York Academy of Medicine . New York Public Library . Virginia Historical Society

b. Sources of Support

The principal continuing income of these institutions derives from endowment provided by the original and later benefactors. Subscription and membership income is also significant for those libraries whose founding and activity are based in societies. To an increasing extent, as endowment income is outstripped by inflationary trends and proliferous publishing, dependence for operating income is placed on charitable donations and annual giving. Groups of "friends" and "associates" have been established, whose "dues" and fund-raising efforts constitute a small but newly important line in the budget. Foundation grants have largely been directed to the establishment of new research programs or to such projects as the editing of major works or the cataloging and indexing of collections otherwise inaccessible. Rarely have such grants provided ongoing support of basic operating costs or acquisitions.

While much of their service is in support of the educational enterprise, these libraries can claim no "alumni" and concomitant loyal giving. Instead, they have attempted to generate added income through royalties, sales of souvenirs and duplicates, and imposition of charges for a few extraordinary services. Such piece-meal efforts fall far short of needed new funding and in any case can bear only incremental costs and little or none of the basic asset support. In recent years, several of them (in company with a number of endowed institutions) have adopted the so-called "Total Return" policy of investment management. Gauged to a rising economy and portfolio growth, this policy makes available for current operating expense some portion of realized capital gains. Strictly interpreted, this is expenditure of capital, and has become necessary to the maintenance of collections and services in the face of fast-rising costs. And in times of falling investment markets, the impact on operating funds can easily be imagined.

Certain well-known federal programs of library support have not been available to the independent research libraries until very recently. They were not recognized as "educational institutions" under the Higher Education Act (Title IIA) until 1973; neither were they eligible

(nor, in effect, are they now) with the tax-supported public libraries under the Library Services and Construction Act. Further, the independent libraries have been subject to potential and even actual "negative" support, by virtue of Internal Revenue Service regulations which (in the absence of proven "public support") may classify them as private operating and non-operating foundations with restrictive fiscal requirements. They may even be obliged to disperse their endowment and possibly to reimburse the IRS for auditing costs. While these provisions of the 1969 tax reform bill may have been an appropriately stringent response to tax evaders, their application to such service-based institutions is patently wrong and potentially disastrous.

c. Objectives

Original statements of purpose of these libraries tended toward what may now be termed grandiose. From the wish "to perpetuate the history of moral and political events, and to improve and interest posterity" (American Antiquarian Society) to "the building up of character" (will of John Crerar). In actuality, their missions are nearly identical: to provide the corpus of records necessary to intellectual inquiry in one or more disciplines, in dimensions as complete as possible and with the optimum provision of scholarly apparatus and physical convenience. While the various disciplines originally selected have generally been narrowed with decreasing fiscal capabilities, these libraries have fairly well defined boundaries. Indeed, the boundaries have been sharpened by the nature of materials and collections becoming available and variously acquired by these libraries. In addition, corollary objectives are to insure availability of and access to these holdings, to provide assistance to scholars in their utilization, to aid in dissemination and publication of resulting works, and generally to acquaint the public with the significance of the institutions and their needs.

d. The Collections: Acquisition, Organization, Conservation

As noted above, acquisitions policies of the independent research libraries are shaped by the intellectual parameters of the disciplines served. Whatever contributes to fullness and depth

of the resources thereby provided for study of a given area is deemed to be required. While certain fields of study are common to several of these libraries (e.g., early American history), their views of these fields will differ according to their respective emphases (i.e., early Massachusetts or Virginia history, the American Indian, colonial science). Examples of specialization can seem of limited geographic interest; yet they have national significance in the context of U.S. historical development and, taken together, constitute the fundamental and total original documentation of the era. Accessions are built over a continuum of years, with acquisition of appropriate collections becoming available through gift or purchase, as well as careful additions from current publishing. Through a policy of collecting broadly within its field of interest, the independent research library is subsequently broadly prepared to respond to the scholar's inquiry.

Organization for use looks also to future scholarly approach and requires quite specialized and standardized techniques. The cataloging of manuscripts and rare volumes, and the indexing and calendaring of private papers (as examples) entail scholarly investigation and analysis, equivalent in their way to the efforts of later researchers, and to the information analysis centers acclaimed in scientific disciplines. Published catalogs of these collections, indeed, constitute the bibliographic record on which scholars everywhere depend. Regrettably, the resources available may be insufficient to provide for both acquisition and the final organization, and in this respect supplemental funding has been critically important.

Similarly, conservation and preservation of these collections has suffered because of necessary fiscal constraints. While the need for such steps in public, special, and college libraries is relatively small, conservation is fundamental to the existence of the independent (and other) research libraries. Substantial portions of their holdings are unique, and considerable effort has nearly always been devoted to care and preservation. Related research and training facilities, while woefully inadequate, have in fact been centered in these institutions.

The National Program document speaks of the growth and development of American libraries as having been regrettably independent, uncoordinated and wasteful. With respect to the group of libraries discussed herein, their growth has been inherently, and fortunately, independent, and it certainly cannot be characterized as "wasteful," for only by their efforts have the basic and original records been preserved and not wasted. In certain respects, today's "waste" (e.g., ephemera) is the artifact essential to tomorrow's scholarship. The independent research libraries may thus lay fairly unique claim to a responsible role in preserving and providing humanity's intellectual record. The acclaim given to economic entrepreneurship of the "private sector" could and should be shared with the intellectual entrepreneurship of the research library.

e. Access and Utilization

A potential user may desire access to and utilization of a given library's collection for a number of reasons. With respect to the independent research library, the surpassing reason is the presence at one place of a major portion of known resources needed for the given scholar's work. The matter of "increased access" and its implications, as noted in the National Program, will be discussed in a later section. For the moment, it may be said that, for the person to whom the collection is truly meaningful, it is not the individual books and papers which most draw him; it is their presence together in a definitive corpus, not buried in some larger general holdings, a collection whose synergism builds inspiration, which (as a colleague phrases it) will "provoke" scholarly inquiry. Access and utilization are thus planned primarily for those individuals who can fully exploit the potential.

The independent research libraries have, amongst them, varying policies concerning admission. (So, too, do other facilities of this country, such as museum study facilities, high-energy laboratories, aquarium specimen collections, etc.) A number of the libraries undertake no screening of users; to a considerable extent, the nature of their holdings is such as makes this feasible and even necessary (e.g., current science journals), with plentiful reader space being another deciding factor.

The latter element results in some restrictions where space is at a premium. In particular, where library materials are rare, fragile, irreplaceable, or excessively costly, a serious (as opposed to superficial) need must be demonstrated. For the most part, users are working at post-graduate and post-doctoral levels and have primarily academic affiliations. The individual service provided to scholars includes not only access to the needed records, but also the complicated bibliographic machinery essential to the tracing, tracking, unlocking, evaluative and inferential processes of their respective disciplines and studies. The home universities cannot and should not attempt to create each its own facility in the areas covered; that, indeed, could be "wasteful," and is made unnecessary by the national resources represented by the independent research libraries. The steady increase in their use reflects their established and, indeed, essential role in the educational and research communities of the country.

f. Special Services and Programs

Services by these libraries to researchers are not limited, however, to the resources, bibliographic apparatus, and study facilities noted above. A number of the institutions have sought and obtained special funds, by which fellowships, stipends, and other financial support are awarded to select scholars, some being on an international exchange basis. A few can provide housing in facilities owned by the library. Through cooperative programs with university and commercial presses, some assistance is given to publication of scholarly work. Nearly all the libraries issue their own publications from time to time, both bibliographic and discursive, and of substantial content and high merit. Permanent research staff is maintained in several institutions, carrying ongoing research and providing consultative advice to visiting scholars. Cooperative courses, programs, and seminars are undertaken with academic institutions and consortia. Through a combination of such activities, several of the libraries are achieving recognized status as institutions for advanced research, similar to the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study, the Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences, the Salk Institute, and others. Such centers of independent study and research are gaining increased importance, as academic institutions are forced into narrower roles by financial and social pressures.

g. A Matter of Modernism

The question is occasionally raised whether such institutions are not "ivory towers" out of touch with advances in technology and new methods. It cannot be said that they are fully computerized and miniaturized, seemingly the two criteria for judging degrees of progress. But neither are they ignorant of these tools and techniques. At least one library (American Antiquarian Society) participates in the Ohio College Library Center network, with significant benefits from and contributions to that activity. Another (Newberry Library) is involved in construction of a data base relating to map resources and leads the country in training scholars in quantitative history. A third (Crerar Library) makes daily use through its terminal of the data bases offered on-line by the Systems Development Corporation, Lockheed Corporation, and the National Library of Medicine. While several libraries employ computer facilities for such business operations as payrolls, the cost of greater computerization in both management and bibliographic functions is prohibitive due to their narrow support base. It must be remembered that their independence deprives them of the financial and plant resources of large, parent institutions.

With respect to miniaturization, however, these libraries are no strangers to microforms of various types. Some of the earliest use of microfilm for preservation and resource sharing, in fact, occurred at these institutions, with production of complete master files of early newspapers and other cooperative microfilming projects. While the National Program lays emphasis on cost savings through space savings via microforms, research libraries assign greater value to enhanced access to resources made possible by this technology. They have pioneered in that access, again not as profiting entrepreneurs but with sole concern for a genuine scholarly need and a feasible solution.

2. Relationship to Other Libraries and the World of Learning

As will have been noted above, the independent research library differs little in essential purpose from university or even large industrial research libraries. It answers well to the

definition of "research library" put forward by the American Council of Learned Societies:

"Research libraries may be defined as institutions whose collections are organized primarily to the needs of scholars and so to facilitate effective action on the frontier of every field of knowledge, traditional and novel ... At their best they are notable for the variety and depth of their holdings and for the quality of research that they support." (2)

However, the independent research libraries differ from other research libraries not only in their founding, governance, and support but in distinctive characteristics which underlie and shape their unique role and their contribution to American scholarship and intellectual resources.

a. Policies and Objectives

It is in matters of acquisition policy, scope of collection, and mode of service that these institutions are most usefully defined and most capable of contributing uniquely to the National Program. As previously stated, collection scope is generally described by the parameters of discipline or area interest, in terms of chronology, geography, historic significance, format or subject boundaries. These may well have been determined by the institutional history, including collecting patterns of founders and trustee decisions. Potential additions are judged by the measure to which they contribute to depth and completeness of the resource or aid in scholarly exploration, examination, comparison, insight and conclusion. The university library, on the other hand, must with its available funds give attention to changing curricular needs, to shifting research interests of academic staff, and mercurial projects. The tax-supported public library, too, must satisfy the general reading interests, with data and information specific to the need of that hour. Both university and public libraries, then, must respond across a wide spectrum of disciplines, to thousands of person-specific demands. Such user demands thus shape these library collections. The independent research library, by contrast, focusses on a relatively narrow spectrum of human knowledge and seeks to maintain eminence therein. In a very real sense, its collection shapes its readership, which tends to be not exclusively local but regional, national

(2) On Research Libraries; Statement and Recommendations of the Committee on Research Libraries of the American Council of Learned Societies, Submitted to National Advisory Commission on Libraries, November 1967.

and even international. While their number may be relatively small, it is of high repute; the determination of institutional value is therefore very difficult and requires special measuring, noting (in the words of the ACLS definition above) "the quality of research they support."

b. Role in Education and Scholarship

As will be discussed later with respect to principles of access, research libraries have distinct missions which require clear understanding of their relation to the "general public" - an entity which the National Program document conceives as the deserving recipient of a much-enhanced library and information service. While the phrase is humanely and even politically appropriate, it implies a certain populist denominator. Furthermore, the program document generalizes the "public" use of "information" in such broadly understandable and appealing terms as to lose sight of the extraordinary range of human inquiry and the knowledge record. The uses of information for "increasing their own productivity," "continuing education," "enriching personal life" are surely important; yet the concepts somehow miss the functions performed by many research libraries. It is no exaggeration to state that they do serve the "general public," in the sense that humanity benefits from their use and, indeed, that any person may have a need which is most appropriately filled by utilization of such collections. To attempt to defend a role for research libraries is to attempt a defense of humanistic studies in a time of critical utilitarian needs, to protect the scholar from the pragmatist. Such is not the function of this or the companion papers, yet the difficulty must be surfaced. For the role of research libraries (including the independent institutions) lies primarily in service to higher education, advanced research, and pure scholarship - all of which are also critically important to our country's present health and future welfare.

Within the province of research libraries, it must also be recognized that the needs for information and the means of obtaining and utilizing it differ widely among disciplines. The posture of the library in serving education and scholarship will recognize the variant needs and differing circumstances required for "productivity," whether it be the nuclear physicist or the philosopher.

The special merit of the independent research library lies in its on-going commitment to its specialty and the optimum "circumstances" it provides to the researcher for "productivity." The collection may well cross the usual boundaries of disciplines and academic departments and permit free-ranging inquiry untrammelled by curricula - degree requirements. The independent research library thus provides a resource, more narrowly defined but rich in depth, supplementing and in certain respects surpassing the university or great public library resources, by virtue of its holdings, facilities for study, and such refinements as seminars, fellowships, housing, etc. More and more, these institutions are becoming the locus for independent research, removed from the teaching environment. This is a relatively recent phenomenon, fostered by changing patterns of the educational process, as will be noted in a following section.

c. Separatism and the Cooperative Movement

By the terms of their founding and the search for excellence along their respective paths, the independent libraries have attained highly respected positions as distinct - and separate - institutions. Being non-tax supported and non-governmental, they have not been drawn into affiliation or merger with other such institutions, in the manner of political conglomerates. While a number of cooperative programs have been arranged with educational institutions, they have not sought the mutual support afforded by interuniversity affiliation. Being preeminent in their specific fields, they have not felt the need to gain access to resources of other institutions. They have no primary clientele (such as faculty and student body) to whom they may feel obligated to arrange interlibrary borrowing privileges. Their users come to them and stay with them, for the corpus is there, with little or no need to bring in pieces from hither and yon. They are, nearly as can be, sufficient unto themselves.

The present thrust toward library cooperation and networks is based primarily on the economic truism that no library can hope to contain everything its clientele may require. Thus, one will depend on borrowing the hopefully occasional items requested but unowned.⁽³⁾ Yet the rate of current

(3) Studies show that the average university research library can provide even what it owns only about 60% of the time, the remainder being in circulation, at bindery, lost, etc.

publication and, particularly, the wide spectrum which most libraries attempt to cover bring on an exacerbating shortage which makes networking highly inviting - to all but the large libraries which bear the brunt of the request load, at no little cost in staff absorption and collection wear-and-tear. The image of most of the independent research libraries, in these times of right-to-know, freedom to read, and citizen supremacy has been colored at least gray if not villainous, elitist if not reactionary, retreating if not completely isolationist. It is not an attractive role, yet there is good and substantial reason for much of their policy, as will be outlined in later pages.

The "cooperative posture" is in wide favor, and the independent research libraries are pictured as having little concept of the need, little grasp of the possibilities. Yet, in fact, they have participated in untitled, informal, semi-formal, and even formal cooperation over many decades. To achieve their present eminence would have been impossible had they avidly competed with each other or with the great university collections. One of the earliest cooperative interlibrary agreements in the country was formally concluded in 1896 by the John Crerar, Newberry and Chicago Public libraries, so that their resources might be directed in orderly and logical manner to their respective specialties and thus to the greatest benefit of scholarship in Chicago and the nation. Subsequently, there have been additional understandings with and transfers of material involving the University of Chicago and Northwestern University. In the Boston region, a number of independent and other research libraries have divided the manuscript field among them: the historical to Massachusetts Historical Society (except the Worcester area to the American Antiquarian Society); literary manuscripts to Harvard's Houghton Library; business materials to the Baker Library. In early American history, the Antiquarian Society now concentrates on printed materials and, as noted above, the Massachusetts Historical Society on manuscripts. The several independent libraries in Philadelphia are fully aware of their respective specialties. The Pennsylvania Historical Society has manuscripts but no rare books; the Library Company has the rare books but no manuscripts. Neither get into the specialties of the American Philosophical Society: history of botany, genetics from Darwin to the present, specialized sectors of atomic physics, the Franklin papers, American

Indian languages, etc. In all cases, a library receiving materials in another's area of concentration will see that the proper home is found; fragments take on their real value in their own context. Thus is cooperation practiced in matters of acquisitions, to a degree not always even considered in many other libraries. Further, these libraries (as "neutral" territories) become the locus of cooperative college and university research and education programs.

3. The National Program: Hopes, Problems, Possible Solutions

The preceding sections have attempted to portray the distinctive nature and problems of the independent research libraries, as well as the role which they fill in the continuum of information and research resources of the country. In particular, some of the critical differences have been discussed, distinguishing them from academic and other research libraries in matters of objectives, services and responses to contemporary developments in the library world. Attention now turns to the proposed National Program of Library and Information Services, and its impact on that part of the scene inhabited by the independent group.

a. General Problems of the Research Library Community

Since another paper of amplification deals ably with university libraries and their problems, the present recital of difficulties will attempt brevity, for many of their general problems are also the independent libraries' problems. A number have common origin in the current pressures and shifts throughout the sphere of education, both secondary and higher (or "post-secondary," as another national commission cautiously names it). Foremost has been the great broadening of opportunity for enrollment and for expanded and new programs in colleges and universities. Institutional populations have exploded and curricula have multiplied. The latter have demanded not only resources in new disciplines but in the new languages of developing countries and, most important, the nearly unpredictable needs of interdisciplinary crossing and combinations. The essential requirements of such developments, together and even singly, result in a fiscal reach exceeding the grasp of all but the most fortunate tax-supported institutions - and even some of them

have suffered retrenchments due to various pressures.

The shifting patterns of scholarship and changes in educational policy have placed great strains on academic libraries; the impact on the independent institutions has also been quite direct. With the broadened opportunities have come greater numbers, going farther, in distance and in levels of study, seeking the resources which their academic libraries cannot provide, certain that access is (or ought to be) assured. From their own limited means and receiving no part of the massive federal scholarship, plant facilities and library resource aid, the independents enlarged where they could to respond to the need. In a few instances, admission policies had to be made somewhat restrictive, to relieve crowded reading rooms and to conserve literally irreplaceable materials. As stated earlier, the special measures needed to stem deterioration and provide good physical care have been short-changed, under the fiscal pressures commonly experienced during present inflationary trends. Costs of maintaining the physical plant alone have skyrocketed, and few of the independent group have enjoyed new physical facilities. When research librarians compare problems, these difficulties are common to them all: space, crowds of users, high costs, changes in patterns of scholarship, inadequate conservation, processing loads, need to take advantage of new technology. The hurdle to be surmounted is primarily fiscal, and here the independent libraries are at a disadvantage, in the limited sources available to them for new support.

b. The Meaning of Access

In proposing a National Program, the Commission document declares, in its first basic assumption, the need for a more fully developed library and information resource in this country. Indeed, such was the basis of the Commission's founding, as promulgated by the predecessor Advisory Commission. The second assumption follows logically, that there should be assured access to this resource for all our citizens. It is in the substantiation of this statement that certain frictions begin to appear - understandable when descriptive generalities are and must be

employed, yet the implementation is for individuals with highly differentiated needs and objectives. Because of present social problems, program emphasis is given to specific groups to whom attention is overdue. Similarly, the use of information resources is described in largely utilitarian terms, the inference being that a given parcel of information will satisfy a given individual's need of the moment, for decision making, continuing education, personal enrichment and understanding. The principal requirement is to get that parcel into that person's hands, wherever that person may be.

From the "general public" viewpoint, this seems a salutary objective. The "general public," however, includes many whose need and utilization are not satisfied by packages and whose objective is unrelated to oneself or daily "output," except as satisfaction and (in due course) a reasonably significant contribution to knowledge may occur. It is such a "public" that is served by the research library, particularly scholars in the humanistic and social studies, but significantly also those in the natural, physical, and health sciences where syntheses of disciplines and new derivations are frequently occurring. Where the decision-maker may know exactly the piece of the record or the batch of data needed, the graduate and post-doctoral student or scholar does not have this pre-identified for him, for it is he who will do the sifting and evaluation, seeking and conceiving of the insights. For his purposes, a substantial amount of the record is required, brought together over the years. The initial motives for acquisition may indeed change, and segments once valued in one context find startling new significance in a wholly new context, so that pieces are taken apart and put together again in new ways.

So it is that the mode of use and locus of user may and usually do differ for research libraries from those of special, school, public, and even some academic libraries. The materials themselves are likely to be relatively esoteric, possibly fragile, and not frequently used. Nearly always, they must be used in conjunction with other similar materials and, particularly, with highly specialized and uncommon bibliographic apparatus. All of which is to say that the use should not be solely because of convenience to one's residence; that use is normally not incidental or for curiosity's sake; that it can be satisfied by no other materials instead; and that it must usually occur in the place

and in conjunction with other material of the owning institution. "Packaged" information it is not, nor is it amenable to shipment to the user. A seriously proposed alternative has been a sort of reverse shipment of the user to the material.

The second assumption of the Commission, that there should be assured access, is a basic and correct assumption. It is also defined, correctly, that this should be "realistic and convenient" access. With respect to most research libraries, including the independent institutions, "realistic" takes into account the type and state of the materials, and that level of use which requires these, and only these, items. "Convenient," for most scholars, will mean in that place where best and fullest use of resources can be made. These two defining words, for material in these libraries, mean that the user comes to the material, under possibly controlled conditions, and is provided with the major part of the total record needed for study, with physical facilities designed to enhance that particular endeavor. This view may seem contrary to the "network" concept commonly and strongly projected. The principle of access can still be achieved, however, through three provisions: (1) Catalogs of all or portions of these collections constitute bibliographic tools important to scholars everywhere. Their production is exceedingly expensive; often commercially prepared through photography of card catalogs, they are beyond the reach of many institutions. Some subsidy to increase availability could provide the wider intellectual access without which scholarly inquiry may be shortstopped. (2) Where it is necessary that the single uncommon item be provided to a remote user, means for photoduplication of high quality and with requisite operator skill should be available. Such provision is costly and presently beyond the fiscal ability of many if not most institutions and scholars, and necessary assistance must be provided. (3) The concept of bringing the user to the material should, in truth, receive more realistic consideration. To some extent, this need is already recognized in the limited fellowships provided to scholars by some institutions, often through the Research Division of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Improved funding of NEH programs, and a similar extension to other scholarly disciplines, should receive the Commission's support, for in such context it is "realistic and convenient" and, in fact, the only rational mode of access.

c. Targets for Support

The preceding section closes with three suggestions: assistance in preparing and issuing major catalogs and bibliographies; production and transport of an appropriate surrogate of a needed original record to a researcher; and transport of a user to the corpus which, only in its entirety, will satisfy the need. The targets for possible support are, of course, many; all types of libraries will name the principal, common areas and reasons.

Collections that have been maintained at high quality, in-depth, comprehensive dimensions can no longer be sustained. Annual rates of price increase lie in the range of 12-20% for journals, a bit less for monographs. No source of funds can keep pace with such a rise, nor with the increase in numbers of new publications. Not all new items are relevant or attractive to a given collection, yet the acquired proportion is generally lessening. Somehow, principal resource collections must be maintained, or networks and systems will fail for lack of supports on which to hang.

Existing collections desperately require conservation and preservation, and particularly so if access of various types is expected to increase. Time and environment alone are doing away with great portions of civilization's records, and even these ravages are poorly countered in most research libraries at the present. A truly national effort is sorely needed here to produce the trained personnel now needed everywhere, to organize the task, and to establish and support conservation activities in sufficient and appropriate locations throughout the country.

If libraries continue to grow at present rates (which publishers, at least, appear to believe is normal and feasible), provision is surely needed for physical facilities - although the resultant vision of Yale or Newberry in the year 2000 can be somewhat awesome. But some expansion there must be, for new levels of readership at the least. Federal assistance for construction has been vital to many new libraries. Eligibility under LSCA came to the independent research libraries, however, only after funding had largely disappeared. In any event, it had been channeled through state agencies whose priorities to inner city needs and population loads would have effectively

blocked any real benefit to the independent institutions. Should funds become available, their need equals that of the public institutions and it is of national rather than local urgency.

Personnel needs are also recognized in the National Program document, which notes that many special skills are sorely lacking. Its special attention is given to work with minorities and with unserved segments of the country. While conventional librarianship seems currently well supplied with new graduates, libraries have not the funds to employ them, despite the need for processing and service staff. Staff numbers have, in fact, been subject to serious reductions under fiscal pressures. It must also be emphasized that new and essential combinations of expert knowledge and ability are in demand. Independent and other research libraries require competence in: subject specialties, conservation and preservation techniques, computer, communications and reprographic technology, map cataloging and curatorship, fiscal expertise, management techniques, and a host of other specialties. When positions are created, the specialists are hard to locate. The paper of amplification on education should prove most illuminating in these respects.

In general terms, the independent research libraries find the most encouraging phrase in the Program document to be "To designate and help sustain unique national collections." The matter of sustenance is critical to them; their own fiscal resources and efforts have reached the limits of feasibility, but the needs and demands continue to increase. The program support, however, is made contingent upon "wider availability to the general public." The stated second Major Federal Responsibility in network support is to "make unique information collections available nationwide," those "one-of-a-kind resources of general interest and potential benefit for the entire population." It is difficult to understand how the entire general population will benefit by requiring the Newberry Library, for example, to open its vaults and provide its one-of-a-kind treasures to the general public, nationwide. They are hardly of "general interest." It is quite conceivable that their utilization may, in due course, prove of potential and actual benefit. But this will occur only if they are protected from indiscriminate access, and if assistance is provided by the library - and by the nation - to those whose scholarly understanding can draw forth insights

necessary to the betterment of modern society. Without new fundamental support-sustenance - the institutions which are capable of building, preserving and providing the unique resources will gradually but surely disappear.

This is not to say that access cannot be enhanced. As noted in the preceding section, it can and should be. At one point, the Program document proposes to "compensate ... for performing added services." Even to obtain that reimbursement, it is laid on the library to accept "a national responsibility for developing and sustaining their particular collections." Provision for the incremental cost of the access (whatever form that may take) must not be confused with nor thought to substitute for critically needed assistance with the on-going basic support cost. The latter cannot be adjudged "qualified" by some criteria of popular demand or circulation statistics. Criteria for designation and support there must be, of course; but these must be established in full awareness of the asset cost hitherto provided unassisted by the independent libraries and other owners of unique collections, and should be so gauged as to exploit and strengthen their uniqueness, not destroy it. Offsetting the rather limited outlook quoted above, another section of the Program document does state more rationally "The maintenance, preservation and development of these collections is a responsibility that must be shared if they are to continue to serve as a national resource."

d. Assignment of Fiscal Responsibility.

Assigning the shares of responsibility by easily applied formulae seems an unlikely procedure with respect to the independent research libraries. Somehow, the Program document says, "incentive formulas" can be devised to stimulate the appearance of local and state moneys. Most (if not all) these institutions have extracted about all the local private funds likely to be available to them. In no instance have city or (with recent exception) state support funds come their way. As stated early in this paper, the resources of these institutions are not intended to respond to the multivariate needs of a localized general public (citizens or academic clientele). Their narrowed but comprehensive collection scope serves a definable population that is drawn from the whole nation

and even the rest of the world. Thus, a largely national approach to the funding solution is probably more effective and rational than local or state effort. This is not to say the latter sources may not rise with pride at national recognition of "their" institution and make token and even substantial response. But, realistically, local citizens are likely to constitute less than the major proportion of potential and actual users. It is conceivable that some measure of geographic origin of actual and/or potential users could be devised; the principle of "equal access," however, would have to neutralize the travel and expense obstacles of non-residents. As mentioned earlier, the channeling of even federal funds through state agencies or by revenue sharing mechanisms is highly unlikely to reach any but local agency-favored recipients. With respect to the independent research libraries, therefore, other criteria will be required (and must be met by would-be recipients) for designation as institutions having national reputation, significance, and contribution. The support necessary for their "maintenance, preservation and development" will be derived almost wholly from institutional and federal resources.

e. Benefits and Requirements of Technology

For improved availability of information, the Program document lays heavy emphasis, almost to the point of complete dependence, on technology - its applications in bibliographic processing, subject and document retrieval, communications and reprography. It somewhat arrogantly presumes the most serious barrier to be lack of awareness of technology's blessing and even resistance to its advances. A measure of reactionary posture there certainly has been, together with human resistance to change. Yet the reaction to a large extent has been generated by premature, often ill-founded promises declared by industries seeking new markets for products designed with wholly different purposes in mind, and the high cost of as yet often unproven programs. The first of these unfortunate handicaps to utilization is now being modified with the industries' better understanding of true needs and real problems. The second barrier to utilization - very substantial costs - is still present.

Computer technology best copes with the repetitive and/or routine process, such as circulation

control, statistical manipulation and fast retrieval of commonly needed data. Of these examples, the independent research library is generally little concerned with the first, only moderately with the second (mostly with its business affairs), but increasingly with the third. Ready availability of bibliographic data is an attractive prospect, and its benefits are being realized in the publication of the retrospective and current National Union Catalog, the National Program for Acquisition and Cataloging, the MARC tape distribution, and on-line access to many bibliographic data bases (OCLC, Lockheed, SDC, etc.). Most of the independent research libraries are making good use of a number of the above programs, in one way or another. As the sharing of bibliographic effort and the record created can be brought about in more of the specialized areas served, the cost/benefit attraction and feasibility to the independent institutions will become conclusive. Even then, the initial investment required will be an insurmountable barrier without some external assistance; certainly no speculative trials can be financed alone. Here the encouragement of the National Program will be best directed toward demonstration of effectiveness with the specialized, perhaps infrequently used but unique materials held in these institutions: effective in the occasional instance of later cataloging of another copy, and especially useful in locating existing copies of rarely held items, through access to data bases showing locations. This, in effect, is "document retrieval," as related to such collections.

With respect to rapid communications, the need varies depending on the type of use and subject matter. The independent institutions dealing with science are already making good use of teletype and have experimented with facsimile transmission. The pace of humanistic studies does not presently seem to require instant response; as discussed earlier, optimum access is for the scholar to be physically at the library with the core of the corpus needed. Yet, where an occasional copy (in lieu of the original) is to be provided, the recipient would no doubt appreciate fast response. Again, the investment and the benefit require careful study.

Developments in reprography have perhaps the greatest potential application and attractiveness to the independent research library. Their willingness to utilize this technology was demonstrated early on. The leadership role of Clifford K. Shipton of the American Antiquarian Society, in

marshalling the resources of some 250 American and foreign libraries to produce the microform edition of nearly 50,000 American imprints prior to 1800 - the "short-title Evans" list. Remote access to the unique collections will be best (and probably only) effected through reprographic techniques. In addition, the preservation of fast-deteriorating records will depend upon this technology. Availability of less-expensive and better designed equipment for production and use of microforms will be welcomed by all research libraries and their users.

Assured benefits must be demonstrated, not just promised; technology for the sake of being "up to date" is no justification. But the willingness to accept the new technology is there in considerable degree: eagerness with respect to reprography; interest with respect to bibliographic manipulation and access; variable needs with respect to communications. In all instances, cost is a major factor, for some other needs go unmet if funds are reallocated. And without outside assistance, the independent research libraries will be unable to "progress" technologically very fast or very far.

f. Imposition and Acceptance of Standards

The establishment of standards is seen as the first of several major federal responsibilities in National Program development. The need is seen to lie in all areas of technological application - communications, computers, microforms - and with respect to bibliographic records. Participation in networks and in the National Program will be contingent upon (indeed, almost impossible without) conforming to these standards.

Where change in habit and procedural patterns is imposed, there is bound to be some element of resistance. Yet the independent research libraries will recognize that conformity to standards will ease the process of participation for them and will, in fact, enhance effectiveness of the services they now provide to the scholarly community. It may even be suggested that universal standards may be questioned by them for reasons of low quality rather than the fact of their imposition as standards. The need for bibliographic standards is no news to research libraries; the cataloging and preservation of unique materials can proceed only with standardized procedures of high quality. In addition, they

are plagued by the bibliographic sloppiness all too often evident in user requests, scholarly output, and even in the secondary services purchased at high cost. To have some assurance of improvement in these workloads, and even the power to require conformance by those desiring access, would be gladly welcomed.

Technical standards, too, are recognized as essential. Many a library has bemoaned the poor quality of microforms and the inadequacy of associated bibliographic detail and technological equipment. Changes in specifications, implemented by an industry for its own convenience or profit or for the benefit of other communities of users, have played havoc with libraries' investment in relatively costly facilities. Some control on suppliers would thus be well noted. Similarly, requirements on library output of microforms would exert needed discipline on some presently less than desirable practices. Certain independent research libraries were instrumental in establishing standards for rare book and newspaper microfilming around 1970, and recognize fully the essentiality of observance. These standards were far above those of the so-called "information industry."

Finally, it seems likely that operational standards will be established for participation in the national program. These would pertain to the types of services provided and the adequacy of performance. With respect to independent research libraries, the facilities for study might be of concern, as well as organization of collections, means of delivery to users, associated bibliographic resources, etc. When external communication and service are involved, the elements of promptness and quality of response would be considered (both in photocopying and informational replies). The protocols and formats established for network traffic would also be normal procedure.

g. Resource Planning

The National Program, through promoting readier access to the country's multitude of information resources, will make unnecessary a certain amount of duplication of lesser used material. The savings will properly provide for other publications which are not presently available, and so the total information resource will be strengthened. In no other way, in fact, can these

extensions occur, since incremental funding of such higher expenditure levels as would be necessary are not available. To implement this program, the overall resource growth must be subject to some planning, which implies designation of certain institutions as key nodes, as well as acceptance of responsibilities.

Thus far, inventorying of present collection profiles has been undertaken in a number of localized directions and in a few discipline-based surveys. Little specific planning has taken place; the partially effective Farmington plan was voluntary and has now terminated. The independent research libraries have participated to a limited extent in resource inventories: union catalogs, union lists of periodicals, catalogs of specific types of material and in certain disciplines. No thorough inventorying has occurred, however, and while specialties are known and observed, future planning has not heretofore been considered. The Independent Research Libraries Association, stimulated by the prospect of the National Program, has placed these matters on its continuing agenda for its next and following meetings.

4. Benefits of the National Program

While this (or any other) national program will have its problems, opponents, non-participants and falterings, the benefits to be derived are becoming clearer as our thinking and experience continue. The independent institutions, despite their inherent, valued, and determinedly held freedom of direction, will find a number of benefits accruing from appropriate program planning and participation. Such benefits will, in turn, result in improved services by these institutions - a goal they all avidly seek. Thus will the "general public" profit, perhaps often, or even usually, indirectly, and the users and research community will benefit directly.

a. To the Independent Research Libraries

(1) Recognition as National Resources

The National Program will, especially during the present exploratory stages, identify more clearly than has ever been attempted before the essential natures, characteristics, and potentials

of the elements constituting the information service resource of the country. It is a pluralistic composite, some of which seems obvious and well known, other parts less visible but no less essential to the needs of well-defined communities. Among the latter segments are the independent research libraries. The "general public" has known relatively little of these institutions - if they have known them at all. What has been known is generally superficial and even distorted, with little understanding of the real significance of the collections and of the real contributions made by the scholars exploring them. The identification of these libraries for what they are - truly unique repositories of the record of humanity, and effective preservers and purveyors to their respective scholarly communities - will bring about a visibility and an appropriate general understanding and recognition.

(2) Fiscal Strengthening

Doubtless every sector involved with information and its record looks to the national program for some benefit or other - and probably most often for fiscal reassurance. Space needs, continuance of level and breadth of acquisitions, conservation, automation - the list has appeared in this and other papers of amplification on libraries. In addition to these needs, all of which are equally urgent for independent research libraries, relief of their unique exposures is of great importance: unjust liabilities under the Tax Reform Act of 1969 relating to private foundations; unjust ineligibilities of the past for receipt of federal funds in assistance of academic and tax-supported public libraries. The independent institutions have strained to the utmost the resources available to them, yet today they are in seriously weakened condition with no immediate prospect of the necessary infusions. Their history is one of serving national needs, of recognizing and accepting a level and kind of responsibility not undertaken elsewhere, for specific objectives and specifically needed resources and services. The nation, it would seem, might well recognize its debt and responsibility to them. When considering the justification of "viability," the independent research libraries have deserving virtue at least the equivalent of the "private sector" (i.e., information industry), and with primary and even proprietary concern for intellectual resources rather than a personal balance sheet.

(3) Self-Evaluation and the Opportunity for Change

In more than one sense, the national program presents a challenge to all libraries and perhaps most to the independent research libraries. They consider themselves independent and unique; they are independent, and their collections are unique. How, then, to join in some larger plan, submit (it may seem) to new requirements and alter service profiles? There has probably not often been the need imposed for **serious self-evaluation - the users came to them.**

Yet the need for self-evaluation is continually present; indeed, several of these independent institutions are undergoing the process because it has become economically necessary to reduce or change their objectives and their profile. But survival is not the sole concern; given the independent mode of governance and operation, there are unique functions and services which can best, and even only, be performed by these institutions in the pluralistic information society. Even among these institutions there are a variety of institutional characteristics. The national program does offer a challenge and an opportunity for change; it may be great in some, moderate in others, not at all in a few. Incentives of recognition and fiscal aid may provide the leverage; or, changes which may indeed have been desired will now become feasible. These libraries, working together, should and will gauge those contributions which can collectively be mounted; each of them will have to judge its individual relationship to the program, the implementing governmental entities, and the specific modes of involvement.

(4) Improved Planning Base

Forward planning by the independent research libraries has been severely limited by their fiscal capabilities. Rather than a broad overview of developing medium-to-long-range needs and objectives, they have had to struggle - almost daily - with band-aiding of today's bruises and wounds throughout their operations. Accorded national recognition of their unique and essential role in the scholarly resource spectrum, assured of the concomitant measure of federal support, provided with the resulting easement and breath-drawing necessary to raise their horizons, there is no doubt

that the basis and context for planning will take on a quantum improvement. Without these enhancements, the independent libraries will continue their unique activities on a catch-as-can level; with new opportunities and assistance, there can develop wholly new directions and commitments.

(5) Enhancement of Service Programs

Each of the foregoing benefits will contribute specific improvements in programs by which these institutions serve their users and backstop the resources of other libraries. Together, these are among the benefits which can, synergistically, enable the independent research libraries fully to optimize their service programs, to establish a new rationale of planning, to complete and strengthen present efforts and undertake innovative activities. These will differ from the efforts and programs of other segments of the library community, and they will be directed to the requirements of the groups that need these unique resources and whom these institutions, each in its own way, are uniquely structured to serve. Established as service institutions, continued through the decades in these services, the independent research libraries and their directors can find full satisfaction and direction in professional accomplishment and in enhancement of their service programs.

b. To the Community of Users

(1) Stability of Independent Research Library Programs

The services and facilities of these institutions are already well-known to the sector of the "general public" to which most of their services are primarily directed. Some programs are established at less specialized levels and are directed more broadly at the "general public," including exhibitions, tours, even semi-recreational facilities. It has become increasingly evident that all programs are being whittled down and that some programs are threatened with termination because of retrenchment.

The Program document declares that "the Commission's working philosophy is user oriented" and that users "should be the principal focus of a national program." User concern for the independent research library programs is increasingly evident. Such a statement will probably

require proof, strangely enough. There is collective assumption, unfounded, that the independent, privately supported, endowed libraries are in fine shape; they have not made generally audible complaints and appeals and are only now organized to do so. The newly concerned user is always shocked to learn at first hand of the real condition, the real deterioration, and righteously observes that "they" ought to do something about the problem. This user concern can and must be marshalled as evidence, for it is such institutions which can suddenly founder, at which time the magnitude of irretrievable loss is belatedly mourned. Stability of programs, assurance of their continuity and availability through national recognition and support, will be a first-order service to users. Without this stability and assurance, whole areas of user interest and investigation will be suspect and to some extent removed from the range of intellectual access and satisfaction.

(2) Improved Service: Staff, Resources, User Groups

The national program can stimulate and enable service improvements in many ways, as noted in preceding sections. It presents a challenge which can focus examination of the several aspects of independent research library rationale and services. Under various incentives, modifications of old patterns can be explored, good programs can be bettered, new facilities and activities planned. There is hope for needed expert knowledge and ability in the national program's concern for personnel improvement, in both training and institutional support aspects. Collections which are threatened by time and environment can receive a new extension of life through adequate conservation. Their breadth and continuing strength and availability will be assured through support of national resource centers and the concept of national planning. Finally, their fulfillment as centers of scholarly research, formerly separated from the teaching/learning process with its curricular parameters - but intellectually linked in the most intimate ways - can bring to pass a new order of benefits to the users. Coming together in a kind of "critical mass" of intellect, provided with the materials and facilities adapted to their respective needs, scholars will have utmost opportunity for productive exploration and discoveries.

(3) Identification and Rationalization of Resources

A principal objective of such nationally-based or nationally prototyped undertakings as the National Union Catalog and the Ohio College Library Center is the identification and location of specific publications as well as other related materials for research and learning. Such past efforts must be continued and amplified, with more and more of the country's resources brought into the inventory. Heretofore, many informal listings have been quite specialized, limited geographically and not always known to others who might well benefit. Incorporation in bibliographic data bases of national resource centers, such as many of the independent research libraries, will extend the knowledge of and can indicate the particular availability of these unique holdings.

Furthermore, improved inventory procedures will be necessary to the better rationalization of resources across the country. While the independent research libraries will be found to have a certain amount of overlap, their specialization and unique holdings will spare them at least some of the trauma likely in the general academic research library milieu. As "independents," they do not have the problem of reactionary faculty, proprietary alumni, and beleaguered educational administrators. From the user point of view, more effective marshalling of well delineated resources at known centers cannot but be a boon. The range of current and antiquarian materials added to the collective library resources will be greatly extended. True, the libraries may not be bidding against each other at auctions and thus inflating dealer prices. However, the same amount of funds will produce stronger, identifiable, diverse resources which will be to the ultimate benefit of appropriate user communities.

(4) The Scholarly Spectrum: Integration of the "U.S. Library"

The formulation of the British library conglomerate is probably still too recent and too involved in structuring and the process of change to judge its effectiveness. Nonetheless, the concept is useful and even basic to the notion of a "national program," which looks to the involvement and best utilization of a nation's intellectual resource records. The research libraries of the country are involved with a complicated matrix of services, in terms of user needs and types of access, as well as the great

range of human knowledge and history. No rigid system or plan can hope to be effective, no single mode of aid and support can be usefully developed.

The pluralistic character of the nation's libraries will thus require flexibility in planning and implementation, in order to make best and appropriate involvement of all the extant resources. It may be difficult to plan, but it is highly desirable that the national program focus its support according to function rather than by specific segments of the "total" information community. The leadership role of the Library of Congress and the contributions which it and the other National Libraries can be expected responsibly to assume must be also clarified and emphasized. It is clear that they and all other libraries are faced with inevitable change. There is a strong current emphasizing services, the exploration of ways and means better to equip the users in their work, better to get materials to them, better to uncover the bibliographic record, etc. Concurrently, there may be diminished allocation of funds and staff attention to the resource building effort which has so much occupied research libraries in the past. But, somewhere, there must still be resources. In the rationalization of resources - with unlike disciplines, differing levels of need, variant modes of access - the independent research libraries have a positive opportunity. Theirs is the responsibility for resources, of specific and unique character, useful in particular avenues of research, organized for that research, accessible by several means, selected, acquired, conserved. With the appropriate structuring of and assistance from the national program, these libraries welcome the many carefully designed opportunities which may open to them, as part of "The U. S. Library."